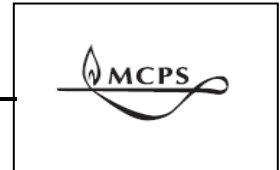


Ashburton Elementary School

6314 Lone Oak Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817 * 301-571-6959



February 2012

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would like to recognize Ashburton students for putting forth effort and working hard throughout the first half of the year. It is hard to believe that we are already into the third marking period! Please take time to review your child's report card in order to set goals for the second half of the year. Report cards were distributed on February 1st.

There are many school and PTA events planned for February. The PTA's Bingo Night will be held this Friday night, February 3rd. Family Science Night has been rescheduled from February to March 6th to allow for more time for teachers to work on the scientific process with their classes. There is an informative presentation on nutrition by Suburban Hospital for the February 7th PTA meeting. On February 24th we will have our International Festival. We celebrate the many cultures at Ashburton with displays, presentations, and tasty food from some of our more than 40 countries represented at Ashburton.

Valentine's Day parties will be held on February 14th. Room parents assist the teacher in planning the Valentine's Day parties, which will be held from 1:45- 2:45 p.m. If your child does not celebrate Valentine's Day, please contact Mrs. Gillespie as the school will provide an alternate activity. Our SGA is selling 'Smencilgrams' this week to raise funds for the Pediatric Unit at Suburban Hospital. The Smencilgrams have been a huge hit so far this week and will be delivered to classrooms on Valentine's Day. I would like to thank our many parent volunteers for helping with the sales in the morning and during the day.

We have started our process for enrollment next year for our future Kindergarteners and articulation for our fifth graders moving on to middle school. Our **Kindergarten Orientation** will be held on **April 26th and 27th** for all children who will turn 5 by September 1, 2012. Please call the school office to set up an appointment and spread the word to neighbors with pre-school aged children. Additionally, Kindergarten parents, please note that your children will not have school on those two dates. The fifth graders are beginning their articulation process and will be signing up for next year's classes soon. There will be a parent meeting at North Bethesda Middle School on February 9th from 7:00-8:00 p.m.

I need your support with getting students to school on time each day. We have a long line of tardy students checking in at the office each morning. It is so important that students start their day off not feeling rushed and already behind other classmates with preparation for the day. Our school doors open at 8:30 a.m. and students must be in their classrooms by 8:50 a.m. in order to be marked as on time and present.

Calendar:

February 1- Report Cards Distributed K-5

February 3- BINGO Night

February 7- PTA Meeting- Speaker from Suburban Hospital on Nutrition

February 13- Dine Out with Ashburton at Ledo's

February 14- Valentine's Day Parties 1:45 p.m.

February 20- President's Day Holiday- No School for Staff or Students

February 24- International Festival

March 6- PTA Meeting/Family Science Night

We are preparing for the Maryland School Assessment (MSA), which will be administered to grades 3, 4, and 5 in mid-March. The second grade students will take the Terra Nova2 (TN2) assessment from April 16th-18th. It is important that students are here on time each day and ready for these assessments. Please do not schedule appointments during the assessment period.

Assessment Schedule		
MSA	Grades 3 & 4 (<i>Reading</i>)	March 12 & 13
	Grades 3 & 4 (<i>Mathematics</i>)	March 16 & 19
	Grade 5 (<i>Reading</i>)	March 14 & 15
	Grade 5 (<i>Mathematics</i>)	March 20 & 21
	Grade 5 (<i>Science</i>)	May 1 & 2
TN2	Grade 2	April 16-18

I look forward to seeing you our many February events!

Sincerely,

Charlene Garran, Principal

The Transfer Process-- Change of School Assignment (COSA) and Special Programs

Montgomery County School policy states that students are assigned to public schools based on their place of residence or in accordance with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and are expected to attend their assigned school. To attend a different school, the student must document a unique hardship or fall within one of the exempt categories. (*MCPS Policy JEE and Regulation JEE-RA*)

Students are to attend their home schools based on primary residence (where you sleep at night) unless there is a documented hardship and an approved Change of School Assignment (COSA). Students with IEP's may be assigned to a school with an appropriate program to meet the child's needs.

If a family moves mid-year and it is in the best interest of the student to remain in the current school for the rest of the year, a COSA must be filled out at the time of the move. Preference to remain in the original school is considered. We have the forms in our school office or they are available on the MCPS website. Completed forms are turned in to the new home school.

The form for requesting a change of school assignment for school year 2012-2013 is available now. To make a request to attend a school other than your home school, you need to document unique hardship or have one of the exemptions listed on the COSA Information Booklet.

Please communicate with the school administration if you move, have special living circumstances, or need help in understanding this process. We must have your legal residence documentation on file and need to have updated contact information for all students.

To apply for one of the language immersion programs please see the MCPS website for information and an application. Paperwork for enrollment must also be submitted.

<http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/curriculum/specialprograms/admissions/immersion.aspx>

Drop-Off Time:

Please do not drop students off at school prior to 8:30 a.m. There is no supervision at that time and students are not permitted to be on school property unsupervised. Contact the office if you need information on the day care providers that service Ashburton.

Kindergarten Orientation will be held on April 26 and 27!

Please pass the word to neighbors and pre-school aged children who will be 5 years old by September 1, 2012. Prospective parents should call the office to set up an appointment for the orientation. Parents will have an opportunity to meet staff and complete registration paperwork, and most importantly children will have a fun introduction to the classrooms. Parents may call the school 301-571-6959 or email Marney Jacobs at [Marjorie E Jacobs@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Marjorie_E_Jacobs@mcpsmd.org) to set up an appointment. Current Kindergarten students will **NOT** have school on April 26th and 27th.



Valentine's Day parties will be held on February 14th from 1:45-2:45 pm. We will provide parents with class lists (*or numbers of students*) so that each child can bring a card for each classmate. We also ask that snacks be as nutritious as possible and be very careful about food allergies! Your room parents and classroom teacher will be organizing the class party. If your child does not celebrate Valentine's Day, please contact Mrs. Gillespie as the school will provide an alternate activity. Happy Valentine's Day to all who celebrate it!

**Clothing Needed for the Health Room:**

Clothing needed of all sizes needed for the Health Room- spills and accidents often mean children need a change of clothes- particularly pants. Send in any donations you can make of used clothes to the health room.

PTA Listserve

To join the Ashburton PTA listserv for current information about school activities, PTA news and events for children, please email Rachel Yang at AshburtonESPTA-subscribe@yahogroups.com

Questions, contact Rachel Yang at ryang1000@yahoo.com.

PEP (Pre-School Education Program)



Dear PEP Parents,

Our new theme for the month of February will be, ***Fun with Math and Science***. We will be experimenting with topics such as: colors, shapes, sorting, mixing, testing, space, magnets, and more. This is brand new theme for us at PEP and we are very excited about it. We think the children are going to have a blast!

TARGETED SKILLS: mathematical thinking, exploration (esp. using our 5 senses to explore), questioning, problem solving, making observations, making predictions

VOCABULARY: observe, predict, check, measure, height, weight, length, tall, long, short, heavy, light, various shapes, various colors, more, less, scale, ruler, tape measure, sort, graph, planet, planet names, stars, solar system, sun, orbit, spaceship, space

SUGGESTED READING:

- White Rabbit's Color Book by Alan Baker
- Dogs Colorful Day by Emma Dodd
- Little Blue and Little Yellow by Leo Lionni
- Growing Colors by Bruce McMillian
- How Do Dinosaurs Learn Their Colors by Jane Yolen
- Mouse Paint by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- Mouse Shapes by Ellen Stoll Walsh
- A Circle Here, A Square There: My Shapes Book by David Diehl
- Shapes, Shapes, Shapes by Tana Hoban
- Are Elephants Tiny? by DK Publishing
- My Very First Look at Sizes by Christiane Gunzi
- Me and the Measure of Things by Joan Sweeney

- What Makes a Magnet by Franklyn M. Branley and True Kelley
- What Magnets Can Do by Allan Fowler
- Planet Mars by Seymour Simon
- Planets Around the Sun by Seymour Simon
- Roaring Rockets by Tony Mitton and Ant Parker
- The Berenstain Bears on the Moon by Stan Berenstain and Jan Berenstain
- Oliver Who Would Not Sleep! by Mara Bergman

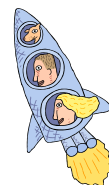
SONGS/FINGER PLAYS:

Four Little Astronauts

*Four little astronauts winking at me,
(Hold up fingers as rhyme indicates.)
One blasts off, now there are three.
Three little astronauts with nothing to do,
One blasts off, now there are two.
Two little astronauts afraid of the Sun,
One blasts off, now there is one.
One little astronaut alone is no fun,
He blasts off, now there are none.*

CLIMB ABOARD THE SPACESHIP Tune:

*"Eensy, Weensy Spider"
Climb aboard the spaceship, We're going to
the moon.
Hurry and get ready, We're
going to blast off soon.
Put on your helmets And buckle
up real tight.
Here comes the countdown. Let's
count with all our might.
10-9-8-7-6-5-4-3-2-1- Blast Off!*



I LOVE RED TUNE: "THREE BLIND MICE"

*I love red, I love red.
That's what I said, that's what I said.
Firetrucks, wagons and strawberries piled
high. Stop signs, hearts and pizza
pies. Roses, tomatoes and apples, oh my.
I love red. That's what I said.*

If You're Wearing Something Blue Clap Your Hands Tune: If you're happy and you know it

If you're wearing something blue, clap your hands.

If you're wearing something blue, clap your hands.

If you're wearing something blue, then stomp your feet, too.

If you're wearing something blue, cap your hands.

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

COLOR

- MONDAY – Red Day, TUESDAY – Yellow Day, WEDNESDAY – Blue Day, THURSDAY – Green Day and FRIDAY – What's Your Favorite Color?
- Dress in the "color of the day"
- Color Show and Tell – Children bring in something from home to share each day, corresponding with the color of the day (e.g., Bring something red on Monday, Yellow on Tuesday, etc.)
- Different Color "spy goggles" or "telescopes" – attach colored cellophane to the end of a toilet paper or paper towel roll (two primary colors can be layered to make a third color)
- Children make their own color wheel
- Finger painting using 2 primary colors (mixing to make a secondary color)
- Water dropper paintings using 2 primary colors & tissue paper or coffee filters (mixing to make a secondary color)
- Children match and sort various objects by color
- Children make marble art using different primary colors that mix to make secondary colors.
- Children work together to make a class rainbow using handprints
- Children mix food coloring into bubble solution and make paintings by blowing



the bubbles onto white construction paper

SHAPE

- Identify different shapes in the classroom
- Go on a "Shape Hunt" around the school
- Match and sort by shape
- Make patterns with shape
- Children create a representational object, such as a house or a car, using foam shapes
- Children imitate or expand a pattern using shapes
- Children trace shapes on construction paper with chalk and make shape rubbings
- Large tangram puzzles – make floor puzzles, file folder puzzles, magnetic puzzles, puzzles on promethean board.
- Children find found shapes in the environment and make prints using stamp pads and paper (e.g. a cup makes a circle shape, a block makes a rectangle, etc.)
- Stained Glass Shapes – children choose a shape cut out of cardboard, paint the cardboard black and glue colored cellophane over the shape to make a stained glass window hanging

MISCELLANEOUS

- Identify different opposites: more/less, heavy/light, short/tall/long, big/little
- Children play with cooked spaghetti in the sensory area seeing how many shapes, number and letters they can make.
- Use scales and predict which items are heavier and which are lighter
- Children learn about the weather and dress the class weather bear
- Magnets – what will stick/won't stick activities?, using magnet wands
- Magnets – Children go on a "treasure hunt" for metal items - such as pennies and paperclips - hidden in paper shreds using magnet wands

- Magnet Painting – Children drag small metal items such as paper clips and thumbtacks through paint using a magnet on the bottom of a shallow box
- Space – Children make a spaceman using paper plates and a picture of themselves
- Space – Children make a planet using coffee filters, water markers and spray bottles
- Space – Children make a space shuttle using a paper towel roll and construction paper
- Children sort Living Things from Non-Living things
- Valentine’s Day: Sorting valentines into boxes by color, shape, size
- Valentine’s Day: Graphing Valentines candy (Conversation hearts) by color



SNACK/COOKING IDEAS:

- Jell-O Mix – Children take blue raspberry Jell-O and strawberry or lemon Jell-O and mix them together before they eat to make a new color
- Color of the Day Snack – Children eats fruits and vegetables that represent the color of the day
- Sorting Rainbow Goldfish – Children sort their rainbow goldfish by color before eating them.
- Toast Painting – Children use droppers to paint their toast with colored butter
- Cheese Shapes – Children use shape cookie cutters to make cheese shapes to put on toast
- Pretzel Shapes – Children make different shapes with pretzel sticks
- Spaceship Bagel – Children make a space ship by adding carrot slice windows to a bagel w/ cream cheese.
- Banana Spaceship – a banana goes on each plate, 2-1/4 slices of pineapple on each side of the banana (representing the wings), a spoonful of marshmallow fluff at the bottom (for smoke). Count down 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, and eat
- Eating Like Astronauts – children mix pudding in a Ziploc bag and then eat it from a snipped corner... Just like real astronauts!

SUGGESTIONS FOR HOME:

- Explore some of the following websites for some fun ideas and activities.

<http://www.parentingscience.com/preschool-science-activities.html>

<http://www.childcarelounge.com/environmentals/science-area.php>

<http://www.teachpreschool.org/2011/04/exploring-weight-and-size-with-scales-in-preschool/>

- Check out books that are on the suggested reading list.
- Go on a hunt around your house or neighborhood looking for specific shapes and color
- Go out at night and look at the sky; see if you child can find the moon, count stars, and look for constellations.
- Go outside and color using old markers in the snow (we hope to have at least a LITTLE snow!)
- If you have a large card board box help your child decorate the inside with “buttons” and “switches” to make a spaceship they can sit and pretend in

NOTES and REMINDERS:

- Group pictures are Wednesday, 2/29 and Thursday 3/1
- Valentine's Day parties are Tuesday, 2/14
- No school Monday, 2/20 (President's Day)
- No school for PEP students Tuesday, 2/21-Friday, 2/24
- No school for PEP students Friday, 3/2
- Ashburton Family Science Night is Tuesday, 3/6 at 6:30pm

As always, thank you for your continued support. Please feel free to e-mail us with any news, questions or comments.

THE PEP TEAM

February Happenings in Kindergarten

Reading

In February, we will read a variety of subjects during our read-aloud and shared reading experiences. This month will focus on story maps and re-telling of literary texts. We will also be working on blending sounds, such as br, gl, st, etc; and digraphs sh, ch, th. Your child will also continue working to their ability level in their individual small guided reading groups on story comprehension, sight words, etc.

Math

We will begin the first half of our Quarter 3 math unit, which has a focus on Measurement. Your child should be able to:

- Identify and describe that objects can be measured by their length and weight.
- Use non-standard units (such as cubes, paperclips, etc.) to measure the length of different objects
- Estimate the length and weight of objects.
- Use the vocabulary long, longer, short, shorter, heavy, light to compare lengths and weights of different objects.

Science

This month in science we will discuss the external features of Plants and Animals found in Maryland. We will also be comparing the external features of plants and animals, and discussing how they use these for survival.



Social Studies

In social studies the focus will be on the choices that people make and how it affects their lives. We will also discuss different jobs that people do and the goods that people make and grow.

Writing

We will continue to focus on sounding out unknown words, using good writing skills, and using our best handwriting. Please emphasize starting with a capital letter, leaving spaces between words, and ending with a period when your child is writing at home. We will also be focusing this month on using descriptive words and sensory details in our writing.

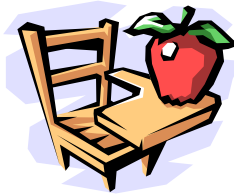
100th Day

In Kindergarten we celebrate the 100th day of school, which will be coming up on Thursday, February 2nd. On this day we will read books and do activities which are centered around the number 100.

Valentine's Day

There will be a Valentine's Day party on Tuesday, February 14th. Look for more information from Room Parents to come home in folders.

--The Kindergarten Team



First Grade News

The first grade team is excited to begin the 3rd quarter of school! During this quarter students will participate in all areas of the integrated curriculum.

During the month of February students will be focusing on using informational text in order to identify the main idea and details of the story. At home, try asking your child to identify the main idea of a story that you have read together.

For the next couple of weeks in Writer's Workshop we will be researching facts about the United

States and other countries in order to write informational pieces.

In Math, we will be working on measurement and fact families. To practice at home, try having your first-grader measure objects around your house using non-standard measurement (for example: their feet, a spoon or other household objects).



During the month of February, students will be working to identify, describe and compare different natural and man-made objects in the environment. While walking outside or taking a trip, involve your child in a discussion about some natural and man-made objects you see.

In Social Studies we will also be focusing on the difference between natural and man-made features and how they modify the environment.

We are very excited about all of the learning experiences that we have coming this month! Thank you to all of the volunteers! You have been so helpful and supportive!

Town News from Second Grade

It's hard to believe we're already into the third quarter. Time is flying by, but the second graders have been hard at work learning through every minute. February is filled with many fun activities and projects as well as an exciting field trip.

Reading

We will continue working with story elements including problem and solution, plot and point of view. We'll also be discussing how the setting is important to the story. While reviewing problem and solution, we'll be looking at how a character responds to the problem through feelings and actions. Later in the month we are moving into poetry where we will be focusing on rhythm and rhyme. Additionally

we'll be reviewing compound words and prefixes.

AGOPP

We will begin working in the Media Center on a research project called AGOPP. AGOPP is a research process model and its letters stand for: Ask questions, Gather information, Organize information, Prepare/Produce information, and Present and assess information. Students will use what they've learned about asking and answering questions through texts to research and compile information on a topic. This will be used to produce an informational book on the information learned.

Writing

This month we will be focusing on opinion writing. Students will formulate an opinion with detailed support explaining their own point of view. We will be learning about how word choice, organization and descriptive adjectives can help strengthen an opinion piece.

Math

This month we will be working on measurement. Students will learn about many measurement tools and standard units of measure, including centimeters, meters, inches, and feet. We will be comparing units of measure as well as the measurable attributes of a variety of objects. Second graders will also be estimating length and learning about line plots.

Science

This unit in science we are learning about astronomy and plants and how things change over time. In astronomy, second graders will be learning about the sun and moon. We will be observing the moon over time to see how it changes. Students will be required to observe the moon each night of the week and quickly sketch what they see. We will use those observations in the classroom to keep a journal of how the moon changes over time. Additionally, we will be growing



plants in the classroom and keeping a journal of how the plant changes over time. Towards the end of the month we'll begin our discovery of different natural habitats.

We are excited to announce our next field trip to the Air and Space Museum including a session in the new planetarium. We will be going on Thursday, February 16th. The field trip form went home on Monday, January 30th. If you're interested in volunteering, try to send the form back right away as volunteer spots tend to fill up quickly.

Social Studies

Second graders will be learning about technology of the past and present. We will be discussing how it affects daily life as well as how it has changed the way we travel, communicate and learn. Additionally, we will be learning about natural, capital and human resources as well as goods and services.

Thank you for your continued support. Please do not hesitate to call with questions and concerns!

-Ms. Ashin, Ms. Bouquet, Ms. Canard, Ms. Fox, Mrs. Melendez & Mrs. Rush

February News From Third Grade

We had a very successful second quarter and the third graders are continuing their hard work as we begin the third quarter. The third quarter is a busy time of year for third grade as we will continue our preparation for the Maryland School Assessment in March. We encourage students to complete the MSA Reading packets each week so that they practice the skills that will be on the state assessment.

3rd Grade Math:

In 3rd grade math, students will be taking the Unit 3 assessment on multiplication and

division this month. Students will also begin their study of geometrical figures (both plane and solid). Unit 4 will also include: Identifying, describing, and classifying polygons; identifying the symmetry of geometric figures and real-world objects; and identifying slides, flips, and turns using pictures and objects. You can help your third grader at home by identifying real world examples of plane and solid geometric figures (i.e. ice cream cone, stop sign, soda can)

4th Grade Math:

Students instructed in 4th grade math will be learning the relationship between fractions and decimals. Students will be able to compare, order, and place fractions and decimals on a number line. Students will also be exploring probability and will use tree diagrams to identify the frequency of outcomes.

Reading:

In reading, students will be learning about figurative language, historical fiction, and novel studies. They will be able to identify and give examples of alliteration, personification, similes, and metaphors. At home, you can help your third grader by coming up with examples of the above figurative language. We also encourage students to read novels at home. Students are also working on completing their AGOPPE research projects.

Writing:

In writing class, students will be writing to persuade this quarter. We will be discussing strong leads, persuasive language, complete arguments, and restating opinions. We will also be working on adding more sophisticated language to our writing.

Social Studies:

In social studies, students will learn about identifying people who have made a positive impact on the world, studying and looking at examples of citizenship, discussing laws and rules, and looking at different ways to be elected to positions of authority. At home you can watch documentaries of famous people and discuss their contributions. You can also follow the election coverage and discuss how various people are elected.

Science:

This month, third graders will be learning about chromatography. This is the process by which inks are separated out from paper to determine which pen was used to write a note. We will be conducting experiments in class using pens, coffee filters, and water.



Sincerely,
The Third Grade Team

News 4 You

How quickly time flies! We have already begun the third marking period! As we head into the second half of the school year, we want to remind you of a few things. In addition to nightly homework and studying basic facts, students are encouraged to complete maintaining skills packets to help prepare for the MSA. A new packet will be distributed each Friday, and is due the following Friday. Look for weekly TQ charts to come home in Friday folders. Please discuss goals with your child and the

progress they make on a weekly basis. The TQ chart should be returned to school the following Monday with a signature!

Reading/ Language Arts

We are beginning our unit on **Biographies and Autobiographies** which was developed by the William and Mary Center for Gifted Education. Many students will be reading about the life of an author as well as an example of his/her work. Please ask your student about who he/she is learning about. Daily vocabulary study continues as well. As always, please help your child make time for sustained reading on a daily basis.

Students will begin to work on the traits of "word choice" "voice" in writing. While these are some of the more difficult of the Six Traits of Writing, they are often the most fun to learn! Students will incorporate their knowledge of "ideas" and "organization" to these pieces as well and will continue to refine their self-editing skills and knowledge of standard English conventions of language (punctuation, sentence structure, usage and spelling).

Social Studies

In social studies, students will begin to discuss the early settlers of Maryland, their motives for migration, and the difficulties they encountered. Looking at the history of immigration patterns, students will also discuss the "push and pull" reasons for migration to America. Students should be working hard at home to write their Immigration Reports from the immigrant they interviewed.

Mathematics

As we begin the third marking period, students will work on decimal and common fractions, and percents. Students will read, write, and represent interchangeable simple fractions, decimals, and percents using symbols, words, and models. They will also compare and order fractions in equivalent forms, including improper fractions and mixed numbers with like and unlike denominators, add and subtract fractions and mixed numbers, and lastly will compute, 10, 20, 25, 50 and 100 percent of a number. Students will apply a variety of strategies to solve problems with fractions, decimals, and percents.

All students have been working hard towards meeting their goal of mastering basic math facts in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division! As each child meets this goal, he/she will have his/her name added to the Math Wall outside of Mrs. Brenner's classroom. Please encourage your student to continue practicing their basic facts, as it is extremely helpful for being successful throughout all units in mathematics. Each student should also be tracking his/her time used to study on the fact calendar. This calendar should be reviewed with a parent each weekend, signed, and returned to school on Monday. If you need flashcards for any or all operations, see Mrs. Brenner or Mrs. Imhof!

Science

Soon we will begin an exciting, hands-on unit on Chemistry! We are currently working on our Family Science Night projects. Family Science Night is on March 6th. We hope to see our fourth grade families there!

Thank you, Mrs. Brenner, Mrs. Davis., Mrs. Imhof, Ms. Leiser and Mrs. Weaver

Fifth Grade's Fabulous News

The fifth grade classes will soon be meeting with their guidance counselor from North Bethesda Middle School to learn about registering for next years' classes. **Please mark these important dates on your calendar:**

Fifth graders meeting with NBMS counselor during school: February 6th

Registration forms due back to homeroom teacher: February 13th

We will let you know when all of the forms are due, and keep you posted on all related information.

Other February happenings...

Math

Math 6 students will be starting their geometry unit. Students will explore how to use a protractor to draw and measure angles, the connections between various angle relationships, and how the movement of a geometric figure affects its attributes. Towards the end of the month they will begin to explore the area of various 2-dimensional figures.

As the Math 5 students continue working with decimals, they will be



exploring the relationships among decimals, fractions, and percents and how all can be used to represent the same quantity; understanding that decimals can be expressed as fractions whose denominators are powers of 10 and that percents are fractions with a denominator of 100. In working with the three forms, we will consider the appropriate use of each representation and work to establish foundations for understanding ratios, proportions, and rates.

Please remember that, for all math students, the Maintaining Skills Packets are due every Friday. Students will need to budget their time to complete a part of the packet each night before the due date.

Reading

This month, the fifth grade students will continue their work with informational text. We will focus on feature articles and their distinguishing characteristics and organizational structures. Students will review text structures and learn more about their importance. Students also will review how to identify fact and opinion. Then we will move on to persuasive texts, identifying the persuasive techniques that authors use. We will also continue our review of reading skills with the weekly packets.

Writing

Students have begun their AGOPPE projects. After selecting topics from the array of possibilities connected to life in America in the 18th and early 19th centuries, students have been developing questions to focus their research and eventually their writing. They are practicing the skills of finding useful sources and good note taking, while using both book and Internet sources to answer their research questions. After the students gather relevant and interesting information, they will organize their notes in order to

write feature articles about their chosen topics. In writing the articles, the students will continue to practice what they have learned about developing ideas, organizing writing, and grabbing and holding readers' interests with effective leads and conclusions, as well as use techniques particularly useful in informational writing.

Social Studies

This month, fifth grade students will be focusing on economics. We will start in present day, and look at the cycle of production, distribution, and consumption and the role that money plays in all of it. We will then go back to the 1700's and explore the role that the economy played in the development of the government. Students will be analyzing the problems that existed under the Articles of Confederation including the lack of good paper currency and lack of central leadership. With this, students will be able to determine why it was necessary to create the Constitution. They will then spend some time looking at the Constitutional Convention, debates that surrounded the creation of the Constitution, and the actual wording within the document itself.

Science

The fifth graders in science will explore the solar system this month. While this unit takes us to distant planets, technically, we remain grounded on earth and thus shall restrict our investigations to more conventional research and observations. We have begun the astronomy unit by considering our own amazing planet and the conditions and resources that make life possible here. The students are making connections to the concepts explored in the earlier physics unit, particularly the significant roles of gravity and inertia. As we explore space, we shall study how our Moon and the Sun as well as other celestial bodies

affect our daily lives and the conditions on Earth. All of the fifth graders are becoming “moon gazers,” recording their observations of the phases of our Moon and its positions on the horizon over a period of weeks. Parents should be prepared for invitations to share views of something very “cool” in the sky.

Thanks,
The Fifth Grade Team

Reading Corner

-Ms. Weigle

The topic this month is, “What is reading?” When I ask students, they usually say something about saying the words correctly or reading with expression. They seem to forget that reading is understanding print. Do they understand what they have read *or* did they just say the words? You can help your children understand what has been read. First, read with your children. You can read to them or they can read to you. Second, discuss with your children what has just been read. You can use questions such as these to guide your discussions.

Questions for Literary Text:

- Name one character trait that describes (a character). Use information from the story to explain your answer.
- What is the main problem in the story?
- How do the character’s feelings change through the story?
- How did the setting affect the events in the story?
- What is the problem and how is it solved?
- What other title could you use with this story?
- Why did (a character) say (other characters) were (descriptive trait)?
- Why did (a character) do something for (the other character/s)?
- What lesson does this fable teach?

Questions for Informational Text:

- What information could someone learn by reading this book?
- What labels would you add to the picture to help someone understand the information?
- Why do people call the (topic) the (topic nickname)? i.e. NYC the Big Apple
- Is _____ a good title for the book?
- Identify text features that were used in this book.
- Give reasons why the information is important.
- What is another word to describe (a word in the text)?
- The author used the word _____. What does the word _____ mean?

It’s fun to discuss a good book after reading it or hearing someone else read it. This is why adults join book clubs. Think about this time with your children as your own book club time. This should be an interesting discussion, not just question/answer time.

I hope that this month’s topic has given you some hints that will make reading with your children more enjoyable. Remember, as we help your children develop skills in Reading/Language Arts, we need your support. Please continue to read to your children and encourage them to read. The more they read, the better readers they will become.



PEP PILOT OPEN HOUSE!



WHAT: PEP pilot is an inclusive preschool program for three and four-year-old children. We are seeking peer models from the Ashburton neighborhood to attend our program 2 days out of the week.

WHERE: Ashburton Elementary School: Room 110

WHEN: Friday, February 24th from 1:30 – 2:30 PM

WHY: The purpose of the open house is to meet potential pilot peers and their families. We will also provide information about the pilot program.

WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ON FEBRUARY 24TH!

PTA Insider



February 2012

Upcoming Events

- February 3 Family Bingo Night, 6:30 – 8:15 pm
- February 7 Special Speaker from Suburban Hospital – Topic: Nutrition & Healthy Eating – Media Center, 7pm
- February 24 International Night
- February 25 Family Skate Night, Cabin John Skate Rink
- March 6 Family Science Night, 6:30pm, All Purpose Room

From the PTA Board

January flew by and before we move on to February, let's have a recap. Many thanks to everyone in the Ashburton community who came out to California Pizza Kitchen on Tuesday evening. A special thanks go to Mrs. Garran and Ms. Cino who greeted and talked with many of our Ashburton families. Together we raised \$461.95!! As a reminder, those funds go directly back to the school and are used for community events, technology,

scholarships for field trips, etc. **Mark your calendars for our next dine-out on Monday, February 13th, at Ledo's pizza!**

In addition, we have ended the first half of the year Box Top Collections and will have results out at the beginning of February on who won the Classroom prize and the individual student prize for the most Box Tops collected. This just in, last year's Box Tops collection saw \$730 earned for our school. Way to go Ashburton! So keep collecting those Box Tops!

Now on to February meeting and activity updates, please note these changes:

Fri. Feb. 3rd at 6:30- 8:15pm is the New date for Family

Bingo Night, this is a night of pure family fun! Free Admission





From the PTA Board (cont'd)



Stay Informed!

Want to get up-to-date Ashburton Community information? Wondering how to find a good reading tutor? Want to find a sports team for your child? Interested in this information and more? Then sign-up for our new Ashburton Community Listserv at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/AshburtonESDiscuss/>
Questions, contact Rachel Yang.

Tues. Feb. 7th - 7pm (Media Center)- PTA Meeting: Special Speaker from Suburban Hospital – Topic: Nutrition, Healthy Eating (the importance of healthy snacking and how to get your kids to eat a healthy meal)! We look forward to seeing you there! Childcare for school age children provided.

Tues. Mar. 6th – New Date: Family Science Night 6:30pm, meet in the All Purpose Room.

Lastly, we cannot forget what Feb. 14th is, it's Valentine's Day so I've provided a few fun facts to share with your family and friends to amaze them. Did you know?

- About 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged in US each year. That's the largest seasonal card-sending occasion of the year, next to Christmas.
- Women purchase 85% of all valentines.
- In order of popularity, Valentine's Day cards are given to teachers, children, mothers, wives, sweethearts and pets.
- Parents receive 1 out of every 5 valentines.
- About 3% of pet owners will give Valentine's Day gifts to their pets.
- Valentine's Day and Mother's Day are the biggest holidays for giving flowers.
- Worldwide, over 50 million roses are given for Valentine's Day each year.
- California produces 60 percent of American roses, but the vast number sold on Valentine's Day in the United States are imported, mostly from South America. Approximately 110 million roses, the majority red, will be sold and delivered within a three-day time period.
- 73% of people who buy flowers for Valentine's Day are men, while only 27 percent are women.
- Men buy most of the millions of boxes of candy and bouquets of flowers given on Valentine's Day.
- In the Middle Ages, young men and women drew names from a bowl to see who their valentines would be. They would wear these names on their sleeves for one week. To wear your heart on your sleeve now means that it is easy for other people to know how you are feeling.
- The Italian city of Verona, where Shakespeare's lovers Romeo and Juliet lived, receives about 1,000 letters addressed to Juliet every Valentine's Day.
- Richard Cadbury invented the first Valentines Day candy box in the late 1800s.

Have Fun, Eat Chocolate, Make Memories, Get Involved!

All the best,
Kathy Rose

Ashburton PTA President on behalf of the PTA Board

Ashburton International Night

International Night is shaping up to be an evening of Worldwide fun and tasty food to tantalize all who attend! So mark it down now, it is being held on Friday, February 24th from 6:30-8:30pm. If you would like to register your country or volunteer please contact:



- Meggin Griffin to register your country
- Jodi Herman Jodi Herman to Volunteer
- Chris Gregorio for SSL Volunteers

Skate with Friends & Family



Join us for Family Skate Night, Saturday, February 25th, Cabin John Skate Rink. Mark it down and be on the lookout for more details as this is a fantastic night of ice skating exclusively for Ashburton families. Cabin John gives Ashburton a dedicated ice rink and that's when the fun begins, as your children skate to their hearts content along with their friends. So come in groups and make it a night of family

Suggestions for the PTA? Let us know!

Kathy Rose, President		
Sonali Arurkar, Co-Administrative VP		
Marci Norton, Co-Administrative VP		
Wendy Calhoun, Co-Membership VP		
Veronica Walgamotte, Co-Membership VP		
Mark Schuloff, Treasurer		
Jen Luna, Secretary		

Submit Content for the PTA Insider!

If you have information you'd like to share in future issues of the PTA Insider, please submit to Lien-Anh Van Wagener.. Content is due by the 22nd of each month for review.



Join us for Dine-Out Nite

Ledo's Pizza

